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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 130
By Blackburn

A RESOLUTION To commend the ATHENA Foundation for its invaluable work in creating leadership opportunities for women and to welcome the 2001 International ATHENA Conference to Nashville, Tennessee on May 3-5, 2001.

WHEREAS, This General Assembly welcomes the opportunity to support gender equity in all facets of society and is supportive of the efforts of those organizations which work to create leadership opportunities for women which permit society to benefit from the particular characteristics and qualities that women bring to leadership in business, government, the arts and sciences, or any other realm of human endeavor; and

WHEREAS, The ATHENA Foundation is one such dynamic organization, which, since 1982, has worked with hundreds of communities to encourage and acknowledge women in leadership positions; and

WHEREAS, The ATHENA Foundation has developed a leadership model based upon the Foundation's mission, the priorities of ATHENA recipients, and which is informed by the experiences, perspectives and observations of others; the model affirms the ways women have

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lead and continue to lead, and emphasizes the need for balance, accountability and continuous learning; and

WHEREAS, With regard to the ATHENA leadership model, Professor Charlotte Bunch, in her preface to *Women of Influence, Women of Vision*, written by Helen S. Astin and Carole Leland, wrote "The empowering, cooperative approaches most often associated with women are not exclusively female terrain. If we see these as crucial models for leadership in the twenty-first century, then we do not want only women to adopt them. On the contrary, it is important to break down the mindset that labels such behavior 'feminine,' serving to stigmatize it as weak, or less desirable than real leadership, especially at the highest echelons of patriarchal power. It is precisely in such places that female leaders and new approaches are most desperately needed if we are to change the patterns of domination that have become so destructive to the world."; and

WHEREAS, The basic tenets of the ATHENA Leadership model include emphasis upon *The Authentic Self, Relationships, Giving back, Collaboration and Courageous Acts*; The Authentic Self should develop an inner clarity through reflection, meditation, restfulness and introspection. Such inner clarity demands an ethical perspective, a high level of integrity and a sense of calling and will result in consistency among values, beliefs and behavior; and

WHEREAS, The ATHENA Leadership Model acknowledges that leadership is practiced in a complex, interconnected world where the development of relationships is important, and that individuals should venture beyond self to access the perceptions of knowledge of others while respecting their unique gifts; and

WHEREAS, The Model does not promote individual success and fame as underlying motivations, but rather a "giving back" through committed service to colleagues, to community, and to the world; in the interdependence inherent in giving back, leadership creates a shared sense of purpose and a drive to change for some greater good; and

WHEREAS, Collaboration, as apart from simple cooperation and specifically not co-opting, is an essential part of the Model; practitioners must transcend interest in individual recognition and positional power to invite people to develop and contribute their own leadership gifts to allow a weaving of ideas and actions which can produce results above what a single individual can accomplish; and

WHEREAS, Courageous acts are an inherent part of the Model; initiating change and taking risks are part of the initiative, courage and passionate commitment demonstrated by ATHENA leaders, who have acted by standing up, standing firm and doing the right thing; and

WHEREAS, The ATHENA Leadership Model assumes that developing skills and competencies is a continuing process that builds upon prior experience and is constructed through self-directed learning; leaders are encouraged to carry out the reciprocal nature of the teacher-learner relationship; and

WHEREAS, The Model calls leaders to a "Fierce Advocacy," not for the accomplishment of one's individual tasks or securing small victories, but for concepts produced by consensual thinking and for a shared sense of ownership and influence which have as their goal a better world and more just and humane society; and

WHEREAS, The ATHENA Model calls for a celebration of the vitality, robustness and possibilities of life, which allow a sense of pleasure in work and accomplishments; ATHENA leaders find expression and a renewal of their energies in the arts and in nature; and

WHEREAS, On Thursday, May 3 through Saturday, May 5, 2001 the International ATHENA Conference for 2001, titled "Momentum" will be held at the Opryland Hotel and Convention Center in Nashville; the emphasis will be upon the strength, drive and energy of the forces at work in ATHENA's efforts to create leadership opportunities for women; and

WHEREAS, The conference will feature outstanding keynote speakers and valuable concurrent sessions designed to advance the leadership skills of women through sharing of experiences. The ATHENA Award is presented to a woman or man who is recognized for

professional excellence, community service, and for actively assisting women in their attainment of professional excellence and leadership skills. The ATHENA State Award is presented to a company or organization whose programs and policies provide leadership opportunities for women. The International ATHENA Award will be presented at the International Conference to a person who has achieved the highest degree of professional excellence, has assisted women in reaching their potential, and whose body of work has made a national impact; and

WHEREAS, All women (and men) who are interested in realizing their full potential should take advantage of the International ATHENA Conference, which affords powerful professional development at a reasonable cost, valuable new ideas and opportunities for networking and forming new friendships, the insights of distinguished speakers, and unparalleled inspiration; and

WHEREAS, This General Assembly wishes to offer its support and approbation to an organization whose goal includes the complete liberation of the talents of over half of our nation's and the world's population and to unfetter the potential of women everywhere; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we commend the ATHENA Foundation for its laudable pursuit of its goal of creating leadership opportunities for women, thank them for their unfailing dedication to that cause, and offer our heartiest welcome to the 2001 International ATHENA Conference to be held in Nashville on May 3-5, 2001.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.